

Testimony of Leslie Fish of Unionville, CT in support of

HB 6243 AN ACT MAKING A TECHNICAL CHANGE TO THE STATUTE
CONCERNING ADVERTISING BY MASSAGE THERAPISTS

Public Health Committee Public Hearing

Friday, March 15, 2013

Representative Johnson, Senator Gerratana and members of the Public Health Committee, for the record my name is Leslie Fish and I am submitting testimony in favor of H.B. No. 6243 AN ACT MAKING A TECHNICAL CHANGE TO THE STATUTE CONCERNING ADVERTISING BY MASSAGE THERAPISTS.

I support the bill that will remove the language “Thai Yoga” from section 20-206g of the general statutes. I do not believe that the practice of Thai Yoga is a Public Health liability related to the recent actions involved with removing illegal/illicit “sex shops.” There are significant differences between massage practice on naked bodies applying oil and manually manipulating muscles vs the practice of Thai Yoga on fully clothed clients for energy balancing using compression and active stretching

I have more than 30 years of yoga practice, 15 years of yoga teaching experience, and have studied of Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy as well as numerous approaches for assisting poses for greater alignment. I have developed a positive and strong foundation to effectively utilize Thai Yoga techniques. I have studied Thai yoga in the US with two different teachers and have traveled to Thailand to learn from the source culture.

While I am not an expert, I was delighted and surprised to discover that the sacred teachings in Thailand present a simple series of basic movements that are most effective when offered from a place of meditative presence and respect. Advanced poses are not considered a requirement. Therefore,

Thai Yoga can be approached successfully from the Yoga tradition. A massage therapist who has migrated away from Western schooled techniques into Thai Yoga and who is not intimately involved with Yoga practice is operating at a distinct disadvantage.

My students have benefited from the assisted stretching techniques offered in Thai Yoga. I have recommended that they seek out a Licensed Massage Therapist for those situations when manual manipulation of muscle tightness would be helpful. Without a doubt, in my experience, those who have had a direct experience of Thai Yoga communicate that the result is vastly different from traditional massage.

I am certified and insured for my professional activities. I continue to study with wise teachers who support my work and to whom I am guided to advance my skills. I humbly respect the teachings of the Thai Yoga tradition and honor the wisdom of the ancient lineage from the time of the Buddha.

The use of terminology related to Thai Yoga has no correlation to the current statute protecting public health for “sex shop” activities.

Thank you.